SARON MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

Saron Evangelical Lutheran Church (ELCA)
510 Main Street
St. Joseph, Michigan 49085

Website: www.saronlutheran.org
Email: info@saronlutheran.org
Phone: 269-983-1273
Facebook:www.facebook.com/saronlutheranchurchst.joseph

The Rev. Joan Oleson, Pastor
Home: 269-983-2475
Email: oleson@saronlutheran.org
Patrick Blanchard, Vicar
Cell: 616-460-7150
Email: pblanchard13@live.com
Marcus Roll, Music Director
Email: roll1mc@gmail.com
Irma Gorman, Organist
Amanda Bradley, Admin Assistant
Cell: 419-306-5780
Email: info@saronlutheran.org
Bradley717@gmail.com
Megan Savage, Bookkeeper
Email: financial@saronlutheran.org
Emily Gaul, Child Care

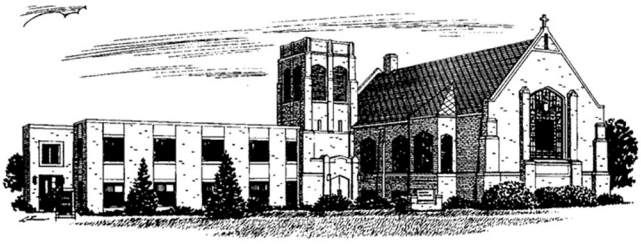
Typical Sunday at Saron:
Fall, Winter and Spring (beginning Sept 12):
8:30am Worship
11am Worship with Zoom
Nursery Available
9:40 Learning Hour for Ages 2-Adult

Summer of 2022 (beginning June 5):
9:30am Worship
On-Location and Zoom
Nursery Available
No Learning Hour

We hold in prayer:
The Rev. Elizabeth Eaton,
Presiding Bishop, ELCA
The Rev. Dr. Craig Satterlee, Bishop of the
North/West Lower Michigan Synod, ELCA
The Episcopal Diocese of Western MI

Our Companion Synods:
Christian Lutheran Church of Honduras
Lutheran Church of Papua New Guinea
Lutheran Church of Latvia

Saron's Mission: *Joyfully sharing God's love for all!!*



PASTOR ARTICLE FOR NOVEMBER 2021

It was very cold in the sanctuary yesterday (October 24) for worship. While I thought everything was set for the cooler weather, I realized it was not. And, I didn't know how to fix it. Those who did were able to find the switch in the breaker box that needed to be reset. This morning there is heat. Thank you!

As I thought about that this morning, I realized it's a lot like life. There are times when we can't fix it. A reset is needed. And perhaps the reset doesn't fix the problem entirely, but it can free us for a different attitude that helps us move forward. It's what we do when we come to worship. We begin with a reset – confessing to God our desire to fix things, but then handing over all that is broken to God's care. We then hear the words of God's forgiveness, a reset.

During this season of thanksgiving, I am reminded to be grateful every day for God's gifts of mercy and forgiveness, as we hear these words, *"By the gift of grace in +Christ Jesus…receive with glad hearts the forgiveness of all your sins. Amen."*

Pastor Joan

Thanksgiving Worship

Tuesday, November 23 at 7pm
On-Location and via Zoom
(Link will go out closer to the date)

Beginning October 24, we added congregational singing at the conclusion of the 8:30am worship service, allowing those apprehensive about communal singing to exit the building before the hymn. This was decided by council after considerable thought and debate. There were no other changes to our Covid-19 precautions. We will continue to wear masks in the building and monitor the situation for appropriate adjustments.

General Information

OFFICE HOURS

Pastor Joan and/or Vicar Patrick
Monday-Thursday Mornings
Amanda Bradley (Admin Assistant):
Mondays & Thursdays 8:00am-noon
Wednesdays as needed
Helping Hands Office Volunteers:
Wednesdays 9:15am-11am (approx)
Megan Savage (Bookkeeper):
Tuesdays & Thursdays 5:30pm

When Pastor is out of town, emergency pastoral care information can be obtained by calling the church office (269/983-1273) or contacting the council president.

Note: Emails for Pastor should be addressed to oleson@saronlutheran.org to ensure privacy. Emails to Amanda and the church office should be sent to info@saronlutheran.org.

Caring and Sharing

IN OUR PRAYERS

Richard Schalon is at the Whitcomb Tower Retirement Center, St. Joseph; **Bernice Koski** and **Kathleen Preston** are at Woodland Terrace, Bridgman.

Happy Birthday Wishes to Saron's Members!
November 2021

Nov	4	Laurel Gacek
	7	Meredith Gacek
	13	Carter Hohman
	15	Coanne Hohman
	17	Dawn Osgood
	19	Brent Dipert
	20	Christopher Gaspari
	23	Ruth Ball
	25	David Lundgren
	27	Gene Embree
	28	Melanie McCammon
	30	Denise Cook

Happy Anniversary Wishes to Saron's Members!
November 2021

Nov	1	Ryan & Kelli Christman
	7	Michael & Laura Chaddock
	21	Mark & Deborah Vollmer
	22	Walter & Sally Schmuhl
		John & Kerrie Hoodlebrink

"God's Blessings for a very happy day and year round!"

If there are any omissions from the birthday or anniversary list, or if a date is incorrect, please let us know so we can get it correct in the future!

SYMPATHY

We extend our sympathy to Laura Chaddock upon the death of her mother in Ohio and to Cindy Brown upon her father's death in Florida.

God is our refuge and strength.
Psalm 46:1a

Where is Saron's heart?

In October, we began our stewardship emphasis for calendar year 2022. That is one of the questions we explored through Mission Moments, the Prayer Vigil and Bible Study.

- **On Commitment Sunday, October 31**, we will respond to God's goodness to us by offering our commitments for annual giving. Following the service, we will celebrate our ability to join in God's work.

If you are/were unable to attend on Commitment Sunday, please return your pledge page to the church as soon as possible so we can incorporate it into the budget process.

We hope you found the events thought-provoking and inspirational!

For where your treasure is, there your heart will be also.
(Matthew 6:21, Luke 12:34)

As we all know, sometimes it feels like we have to hurry up then wait! This is certainly the case with long lead-time purchases such as the custom seating for the sanctuary. The chairs and benches have been ordered to secure pricing and keep our place in line. Final color selections are still in the works. It may take some patience but eventually our tushies will be cushy!

For the other part of enhancing our worship experience, the tech committee has met with TCP, a sound and video supplier with expertise to help us through the process. Our goal is to acquire our own equipment to replace pieces we have borrowed and/or tested out in the past several months. We're waiting for a proposal and will give additional updates as we have them to offer.

We're getting so close to the finish line! Only one more quarter left of our 3 year Fortify & Fly pledge and collection period. At the end of September 2021, we had collected $359,179 towards our 3-year pledge total of $367,205. We are at 98%!

Worship

NURSERY

Nursery service is available during both services. In order to utilize the space most effectively, this option is most directed towards our youngest members and guests. For pre-school age children that occasionally need a little more physical and/or emotional space, quiet activities are available in the narthex. There are also clipboards with coloring pages and crayons, as well as children's bulletins, to assist kids as they transition into participating in worship. **It's vital to embrace having family units in all stages of life in our congregation and as such, we gladly welcome wiggles and giggles in worship!**

The primary goal of the nursery is to provide a safe environment when needed to facilitate a meaningful worship experience for families negotiating life with children. We recognize that may not look the same for everyone and are always open to hearing concerns and suggestions.

As we anticipate receiving new members, it's a good time to reinforce that for health and safety reasons, only the approved childcare providers assigned for that day should be in the nursery space during worship. Nursing mothers are always welcome!

NEW MEMBERS

Saron will be receiving new members shortly. Please let Pastor know if you are interested in joining Saron, or would like to learn more about the Christian faith in the Lutheran tradition.

PRAYER GROUP

Join us Mondays at 11am for a time of quiet reflection and prayer, which includes lifting up the requests offered on Sundays at worship or via other means. We meet in the sanctuary.

ZOOM COFFEE HOUR

We will continue Wednesday morning Zoom fellowship at 11am into the Fall. The Zoom link remains the same from week to week and is at the bottom of the weekly email sent on Thursdays.

ALTAR FLOWERS

You can sponsor a week by using the link in the weekly email or by calling the church office. Make sure to note any special occasion to be recognized in the bulletin. Flowers are $35 per vase. Please follow up with a check to Saron with "Flowers" on the memo line. Thank you for helping to beautify our worship services! Feel free to take them home after the last service and enjoy. Simply return the vase to Saron at your convenience to be reused.

FACEBOOK

We love to share pictures of Saron's ministry on our Facebook page and we get great feedback. It is our practice not to put names with the pictures. If you have questions, or prefer your picture not to appear, please contact Pastor.

SUNDAY SCRIPTURE READINGS

As you prepare for worship, you are invited to read and reflect on the Scriptures for the day.

November 7: All Saints Day
Isaiah 25:6-9
Psalm 24
Revelation 21:1-6a
John 11:32-44

November 14: Twenty-fifth Sunday after Pentecost
Daniel 12:1-3
Psalm 16
Hebrews 10:11-14, 19-25
Mark 13:1-8

November 21: Christ the King Sunday
Daniel 7:9-10, 13-14
Psalm 93
Revelation 1:4b-8
John 18:33-37

November 28: First Sunday of Advent
Jeremiah 33:14-16
Psalm 25:1-10
1 Thessalonians 3:9-13
Luke 21:25-36

Youth

We had a fantastic time at our gathering on October 17. We walked to Jimmy Johns for a freaky fast lunch then played Nintendo games.

There are also events planned for November 14 and December 12 (Christmas Party). Come join us and reconnect with friends from Saron! Bring a friend. Watch for more information in future emails.

For more info, contact Merrily at merrilyannsmith@gmail.com

Learning

Saron is a congregation seeking to become more fluent in the first language of faith, the language of Scripture, in order that we might live into our calling as a people renewed, enlivened, empowered and sent by the Word.

LEARNING HOUR
We offer a time of age-appropriate Bible studies between the two services, from **9:40-10:30:**

- **Grades 5 and Under** meet in the Sunday school classroom.
- **Confirmation Students** (Grades 6-8) meet in the confirmation classroom.
- **Adult Forum** meets in the upstairs lounge.

At this time, we will be utilizing masks, per the current BCHD guidance. We look forward to seeing everyone!

We are always looking for volunteers to assist with Sunday School, even just once. Please contact the church office at 269/983-1273 or by email at info@saronlutheran.org with any interest.

TUESDAY EVENING MEN'S BIBLE STUDY
We meet in Saron's upstairs lounge on Tuesdays at 6pm and have discussion until about 7pm either about the upcoming Scripture or another topic. Those who wish then go to a local restaurant for food and more conversation.

"Iron Sharpens Iron and One Person Sharpens the Wits of Another"

If you have any questions, feel free to call, text or email:
Bob Kynast at 269/921-2786 or bobkynast@gmail.com
Don Hafer at 269/985-3637 or hafer.don@gmail.com

1ST SUNDAY BOOK DISCUSSION GROUP
On November 7 at 6:30pm, we will meet in the upstairs lounge to discuss **"Save Me The Plums", by Ruth Reichl**. "*My Gourmet Memoir*" is how the author describes her book. Vanity Fair calls it, "*A delicious insider account of the gritty, glamorous world of food culture*". Reichl never wanted to be in the corporate world, but as editor of Gourmet Magazine, she was in charge and making her mark. This is a behind-the-scenes documentary of the food industry complete with amazing recipes. It's fascinating and funny and you will never enter a restaurant again without thinking about what you learned from this book.

December 5, our choice is "The Book of Lost Friends", by Lisa Wingate. The historical story of three young women searching for their families in the post-Civil War South is paired with a modern-day teacher who learns of their story and the connection to the students she teaches today. (*Amazon*)

We are planning to meet on-location at Saron with masks unless guidelines are changed. There will also be a Zoom component available. Information will be sent to all who have expressed interest in this group. If you want to be included, please contact Kathy Cowall (269) 428-0354 or kcowall@hotmail.com. Please join us. You will be very welcome and guaranteed a good discussion, for sure!

"***Literature is the most agreeable way of ignoring life***." (*Fernando Pessoa*)

MEN'S MONTHLY BIBLE DEVOTION AND BREAKFAST
Saron Men's 1st Saturday Devotion will not meet in November.

Contact Dennis Lundgren with any questions at dennis.lundgren@me.com

THURSDAY MORNING BIBLE STUDY

We continue our study on Genesis through November 18th. The group meets on-location in Saron's upstairs lounge and simultaneously via Zoom on **Thursdays from 9:30am - 11am.**

Please let Pastor know if you would like the Zoom link. **This class is open to all interested in attending.** You are welcome to join any time, for one session or for many.

Women of the ELCA

We will meet **Wednesday, November 10 at 7pm on-location in Saron's lounge for the Saron Church Women's Annual Meeting**. Zoom access will be available for those who wish. The link will be emailed closer to the date. All women of Saron are welcome to attend.

Contact Melanie McCammon for more information at 269/983-4622.

LUTHERAN WORLD RELIEF

Saron Church Women thanks everyone who contributed to our Lutheran World Relief project. Rather than collect items for personal care kits and fabric kits, we asked for monetary donations to the LWR Quilt & Kits Shipping Fund. **The amount collected totaled $660**. Thank you very much for your generosity! It's greatly appreciated and will be put to good use by LWR.

Hospitality

SUNDAY SNACKS

Who doesn't love a snack during a time of fellowship in the narthex after the service? If you would like to be a Sunday snack host, you can sign up via the link in our weekly email or call/email the office so Amanda can sign you up. We are asking for donations of individual, store-packaged treats at this time. Please plan for 30 to partake. Thank you!

Outreach

NOISY OFFERING

Once again, we are receiving a noisy offering (or those not-so-noisy bills) on the first Sunday of each month. These gifts are then sent to ELCA World Hunger. Thank you for your generous offerings.

BENTON HARBOR SOUP KITCHEN

Benton Harbor Soup Kitchen Mission: *To provide a nutritious daily meal to the hungry of the area, as well as to provide a safe and sheltered place for social gathering.*

On September 23, 120 people enjoyed a sack lunch prepared by volunteers from Saron. Deb Standen, Colleen Lundgren, and Marilyn Frey prepared & assembled a hot dog lunch with cookies baked by Vicki Drake, Fran Bolson, Colleen Lundgren, & Pat Breyen.

If you feel comfortable helping to prepare a sack lunch at the Soup Kitchen or providing cookies, please use the link in the weekly email to sign up or contact Kathie Bradley at 269/921-4665.

Thank you to all who continue to support this ministry with your time, contributions, and prayers: *Joyfully sharing God's love for all!*

INCLUSIVITY TASK FORCE

The Inclusivity Task Force is committed to extending a welcome to all. We, as a congregation, voted on September 26 to adopt, with an overwhelming majority, the following welcome statement and become a **Reconciling in Christ** congregation:

As a community of faith who *joyfully shares God's love for all*, we believe our lives and faith are strengthened by diversity. We strive to be a community who welcomes people of every ability, age, citizenship status, ethnicity, gender identity and expression, language, marital status, political perspective, race, and sexual orientation. We are committed to the work of racial equity. Whatever life's circumstance, we openly welcome and value you. We celebrate God's unconditional love and respond joyfully to your presence here. All are welcome. You are welcome.

This is the official RIC logo you will see on various communications and signage. Watch for more updates about our continued inclusivity journey and celebration Sunday!

If you ever have any questions or need clarification, please feel free to call any one of the task force members.

Connor Ashley: cashley1837@outlook.com
Laurel Gacek: 269/470-6062 or mlmg2445@sbcglobal.net
Laura Hicks: 517/930-0579 or lhicks42@gmail.com
Darlene Kiessel: 269/313-4062 or kiessel@me.com
Diane Madej (Open Hearts. Open Church, N/WLM Synod): 231/670-0328 or dianemadej234@gmail.com
Pastor Joan Oleson: 269/983-1273 or oleson@saronlutheran.org

INTERFAITH ACTION

Interfaith Action (swmichiganinterfaith.org) is a coalition of over 40 faith communities in Allegan, Berrien, Cass, St. Joseph, and Van Buren Counties. Some members of Saron attend their meetings and work with various task force groups. One of the goals of Interfaith Action is to promote understanding and respect for diversity. We hope this discussion will advance that goal by enriching our appreciation for our shared humanity.

Support

The Support Committee will be meeting on the second Tuesday of each month at 8pm. Meetings will continue to be held on Zoom. Contact Don Hafer with any questions at 269/985-3637.

STOCK DONATIONS

Saron partners with TD Ameritrade, a brokerage firm, to accept stock donations. If you would like to donate stock, email Joe Ulrey at josephulrey@yahoo.com to receive more information. Thanks!

Facilities

HELPING HANDS (Previously Golden Hammers)

We do all sorts of things from building maintenance to preps for worship in the sanctuary to assembling bulletins and newsletters and so much more. Watch for details about when this newly renamed group will begin their work again and know that you are invited – whatever your age, gender, or ability. There will be a job for you to use your helping hands.

PIANO AVAILABLE

Do you or someone you know have need of a piano? Saron will have one available to a good home in exchange for the new owner arranging for its move. Contact the church office for more info.

This little piggy went to . . .

Malawi, one of the world's least-developed countries. The economy is heavily based on agriculture and the government depends on outside aid to meet basic and developmental needs. To make matters worse, a few years ago Malawi was hit hard by drought. At least half of the families in the villages were facing severe hunger.

The good news is, the little piggy took lots of his barnyard friends with him to Malawi as part of the ELCA Good Gifts program. The ELCA gift of piglets, goats, and other animals helped families in the villages to survive the drought and have a good chance to escape hunger for good.

Last year, the members of Saron gave generously to the ELCA Good Gifts program during Advent to help needy people in more than 60 countries around the world. This year, we are again offering the opportunity to make donations for an animal ornament that will allow the ELCA to purchase and deliver the animal of your choice to where it will do the most good. Like last year, we are keeping it simple by focusing on four animal ornaments:

Goat – $50

Goats can go where other animals can't, surviving in some of the world's most challenging terrain. Goat's milk provides nutrition for children and goats are quick to reproduce.

Piglet – $30

This little piggy couldn't be a bigger lifesaver. This gift provides natural fertilizer that helps crops grow tall and strong.

Honeybees – $20

Support farmers and healthy honeybee colonies with this buzz-worthy gift. Honeybees provide honey to eat, beeswax that allows a farmer to start a small business, and a boost to crop growth by pollinating plants everywhere they go.

Chicks – $10

Help a family spread their wings. Eggs not only provide an ongoing supply of protein-rich meals, they can also help start a small business and generate a steady source of income.

Look for an order form with instructions in the bulletin each week during Advent.

"The point is this: the one who sows sparingly will also reap sparingly, and the one who sows bountifully will also reap bountifully. Each of you must give as you have made up your mind, not reluctantly or under compulsion, for God loves a cheerful giver." 2 Corinthians 9:6-7

As members of the ELCA, we believe that God is calling us into the world *together*. And with generous, loving hands, we *can* make a difference. ELCA Good Gifts is your opportunity to provide critical support to the ministries and programs that mean the most to you and the people you love. ***– Saron Outreach***

SARON

IS

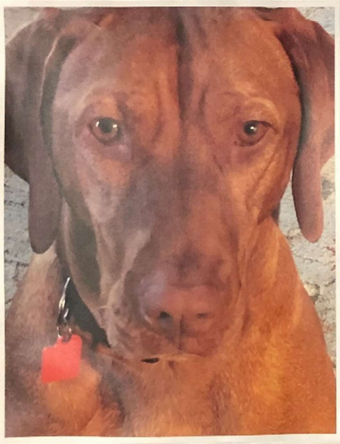
BLESSED

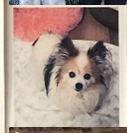
TO BE SURROUNDED BY

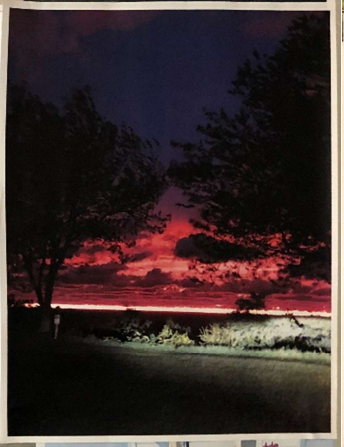
GOD'S

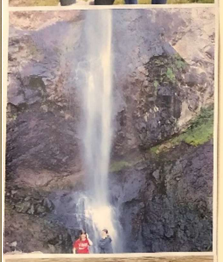
GOOD

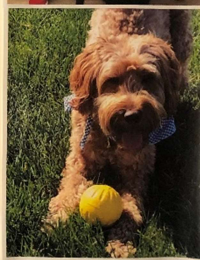
CREATIONS

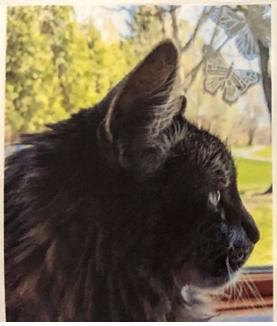


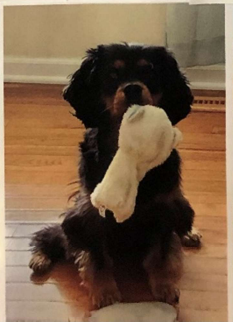


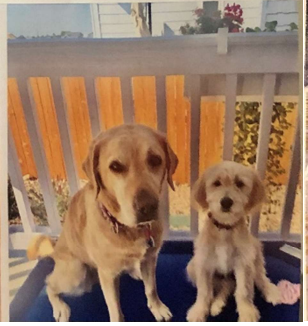


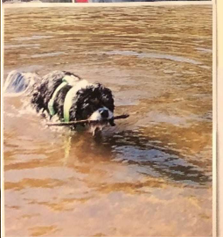


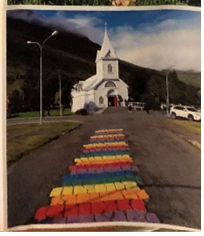












November 2021

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	6 NO Men's Devotion & Breakfast **SET CLOCK BACK!**
7 8:30am Worship 9:40am Learning 11am Worship with Zoom option	**8** 11am Prayer Group	**9** 6pm Men's Bible Study 8pm Support Meeting	**10** 11am Zoom Coffee Hour 9:30am Helping Hands	**11** 9:30am Bible Study 6pm Bells 7pm Choir	**12**	13
14 8:30am Worship 9:40am Learning 11am Worship with Zoom option	**15** 11am Prayer Group 7pm Council Meeting **NEWSLETTER ARTICLES**	**16** 6pm Men's Bible Study	**17** 11am Zoom Coffee Hour 9:30am Helping Hands	**18** 9:30am Bible Study 6pm Bells 7pm Choir	**19**	20
21 8:30am Worship 9:40am Learning 11am Worship with Zoom option	**22** 11am Prayer Group	**23** 7pm Thanks-giving Service	**24** 11am Zoom Coffee Hour 9:30am Helping Hands Newsletter Assembly	**25** **Happy Thanksgiving!**	**26**	27
28 8:30am Worship 9:40am Learning 11am Worship with Zoom option	**29** 11am Prayer Group	**30** 6:00pm Men's Bible Study				

SARON LUTHERAN CHURCH
510 MAIN STREET
ST. JOSEPH, MI 49085

Website: www.saronlutheran.org
Email:info@saronlutheran.org

A Congregation of:
The North/West Lower Michigan Synod
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

November 2021 Newsletter

Dusting cloths will be available for those accidentally arriving to church an hour early on November 7th!